

Panel Discussion of the First Lecture†

The following statements are mostly verbatim from the proceedings of the Panel. Moderator's remarks and some of the interchange have been omitted.

Honorable Henry A. Wallace

The Secretary of Commerce

My Presbyterian conscience, which I inherited from my father who was an elder in the United Presbyterian Church and my grandfather who was a minister in the United Presbyterian Church, caused me to awake at four o'clock this morning to read the lecture in order to be prepared tonight, and on reading the lecture, I had no difficulty whatsoever in discovering the psychiatric explanation of our distinguished visitor. I recognized in him at once what you might call a second generation derivative from a Presbyterian background, a fact which I verified a little later on. It is a marvelous background against which to work, although a slightly difficult background in which to find yourself.

There is a passionate search for security among the Presbyterians and a belief that security is attained with very, very great difficulty. By the skin of your teeth at the last moment you are saved by the grace of God from utter damnation. Those who are raised in that atmosphere or those who are only once removed from that atmosphere are caused to become great philosophers, as a matter of escape. Dr. Chisholm has definitely escaped. He has risen above the realm of "morality" in a Presbyterian sense, and yet it is only a superficial release—it could not be otherwise, being raised as he was.

I do want to congratulate him and all psychiatrists, however, on the protective coloration with which they have managed to surround themselves. I have found when I attempted to deal with thoughts of this sort that I have tended to speak my mind without that protective coloration, and the results have not always been best for everyone.

Seriously, the talk, the lecture of General Chisholm last night is one of the most thought-provoking which has ever been given in Washington. It goes to the very roots of future peace. It recognizes the supremely important fact that security is not attained merely by radar, by V-2 rockets, by atom bombs, by the other devices which were on the point of perfec-

tion but which have not yet been tried, which may be even more devastating than any which were brought out during the war. General Chisholm recognizes that beyond all of these devices of force, there is still something mightier, and I am tempted at this moment to read a quotation from Pavlov, the great Russian who dealt, as you know, with conditioned

† Held in the Auditorium of the New Interior Department Building on the evening of Wednesday, 24 October 1945. The comment of Dr. Samuel W. Hamilton, President-Elect of the American Psychiatric Association, has been expanded into a statement pertaining to the two Lectures, which follows this digest of discussion. The statement and comment of Dr. Daniel Blain, Acting Director of the Neuropsychiatric Division, U. S. Veterans Administration, and the immediately related remarks of Dr. Chisholm, are omitted from this digest, as hereinafter explained.

reflexes—who I found out tonight has a varied standing among psychiatrists—but with regard to this quotation I think there will be no difference of opinion. This is a quotation which I have used repeatedly during recent weeks because it made such a profound impression on me.

Said Pavlov in 1928: "Let the mind rise from victory to victory over surrounding nature. Let it conquer for human life and activity not only the surface of the earth but all that lies between the depth of the seas and the outer limits of the atmosphere. Let it command for its service prodigious energy to flow from one part of the universe to the other. Let it annihilate space for the transference of its thoughts, yet the same creature, led by dark powers to wars and revolutions and their horrors produces for itself incalculable material losses and inexpressible pain and reverts to bestial conditions. Only science, exact science about human nature itself, and the most sincere approach to it by the aid of the omnipotent scientific method will deliver man from his present gloom and will purge him from his contemporary shame in the sphere of inter-human relations."

I congratulate General Chisholm for grappling with the fundamental issue raised by Pavlov in this statement.

I had not been aware that it was accepted universally by psychiatrists that the sad state of the recent generations of mankind was due to a sense of inferiority and guilt and fear. That to me was a most challenging statement. I will not, in order to maintain the protective coloration, indicate where General Chisholm thinks this feeling originated. I am sure we should not betray that secret. Suffice it to say, however, that I would that this address were mailed to all of the ministers and priests in the United States. The thought created in the minds of all those who have to do with religion would be very helpful, I am sure. There might be a very deep disagreement in certain quarters, but the final result, I am sure, would be constructive because, after all, those who are profoundly concerned with religious matters are also concerned with

the objective stated by Pavlov. Pavlov wanted to reach that objective by what he called the omnipotent scientific method. Why shouldn't those who are concerned with religious matters use the omnipotent scientific method? It is precisely the purpose of psychiatry to discover in a scientific way the wellsprings of human nature even as those who are working in the religious field have endeavored to find those wellsprings in an authoritarian way from the Book, from the Bible, from tradition.

But as I read the Bible, there was among the prophets a continuous change to meet changing circumstances. Undeniably the New Testament is different from the Old; undeniably Jesus Christ was preaching a message to slaves, essentially—slaves of the Roman Empire in Palestine; undeniably He was conditioned by that fact. He had to use words that recognized it. Otherwise, why did He proclaim rendering unto Caesar that which was Caesar's?

Why shouldn't we, in the spirit of Christ, continue to grow? Did the insight of humanity end 2000 years ago? I feel that there is room for a uniting of the scientific method of psychiatry with the intense longing of genuinely religious souls to bring about an abiding peace. I was struck by Dr. Chisholm's posing of the question that either we had to find a sure way to peace or else we had to become either slaves or ruthless killers. I know that General Chisholm selects the first path, the path toward an abiding peace.

Those people who proclaim that wars are inevitable, if they really followed their conclusions, could only preach one of two courses today. If they had the courage of their convictions, and were genuine Christians, they would take the course of slavery. If they were not Christians, they would proceed at once towards the dominance of the United States over the whole world. I know that Dr. Chisholm is not advocating that course, but are we "softies," we who do not believe in the inevitability of war, that we don't embark wholeheartedly on the course that leads

to abiding peace? Or are those who believe in the inevitability of war "softies" that they don't embark at once on the course of the "United States über alles?"

The logic of Dr. Chisholm's presentation is extraordinarily compelling. It suggests to all right-thinking people, to my mind, that we haven't gone out with full faith, with full vigor, towards reaching a genuine mechanism for abiding peace.

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[About the returned veteran and the displaced war worker;] I suppose the problem is to try to distinguish between the field of the psychiatrist and the field of the economist. I think it is good psychiatry so far as possible to treat the returned veteran and the displaced war worker just like anybody else. That doesn't necessarily take care of all cases. Dr. Chisholm was telling me earlier in the evening that they found as a result of observation of men overseas that some of them, without being aware of it, developed stomach ulcers and ulcers of the intestinal tract, ulcers which healed up rapidly when they came back to this hemisphere—men who eagerly wanted to get into combat again. This suggests, of course, a peculiar type of nervous tension which might have to be dealt with by psychiatric methods from time to time. Nevertheless, I am convinced that we would reduce enormously the number of psychiatric cases among the returned veterans and the displaced war workers if, by means of cooperation between government, business and labor, we were able to promote that necessary flow of private funds—and in case of need, of government funds—which would make possible full employment. I don't care if you do call work the curse of humanity. I have the feeling that it is a lesser curse than the sense of not being needed.

I think one of the supreme psychiatric or psychic needs of humanity at the present stage of evolution is the sense of being wanted, being needed, being useful. It may be that the Presbyterian capitalists have given us this complex, but it is very definitely with us. We do want a job

and until atomic energy has freed humanity from the curse that was placed on Adam and Eve, I think full employment is a pretty good intermediate goal.

At the same time, I realize very well that it is proper one of these days to raise the question: Beyond sixty million jobs, what? I wish somebody would write, say five or ten years from now, a book along that line. I think it is important, but I think the immediate goal is full employment for the veterans and for the displaced workers. In order to realize the immediate goal, it is important also to have a more distant goal. I think that is good psychology; whether it is good psychiatry or not, I don't know.

That more distant goal, one on which I think we could all agree, is the sense of well-being and happiness which comes from service of the general welfare as the concept of the general welfare changes year by year. I will admit that just working for work's sake can eventually prove to be an ugly thing. What we want is beauty and joy in life, but in order to realize that beauty and joy in life it seems to me that there has been imposed upon man the discipline first of discovering some method by means of which all of us can work together, possibly for incomplete goals in the first instance. Atomic energy has undoubtedly placed a great responsibility and strain upon mankind. It places upon mankind the absolute necessity, in my opinion, of finding the road to an abiding peace; and second, it has placed upon mankind the absolute necessity of learning how to live joyously with abundance. The whole religious training that has come to us out of the past has worked in the direction of teaching mankind how to live grimly with scarcity. I think it is a much greater moral challenge to learn to live joyously with abundance than to learn to live grimly with scarcity.

As I understand the psychiatrists as a result of my brief contact with them this evening, one of their purposes is to teach mankind to live joyously with abundance on behalf of the general welfare. Ap-

parently they believe that if we learned that, perhaps ulcers of the stomach would tend to disappear. We have seen many people around Washington who have suffered in this way—I mean that the soldiers on the peace front suffer this way as well as do soldiers on the battle-front. There are good soldiers on the peace front. They apparently are fighting a good fight with all that is in them, but nevertheless their nervous system does give way. Their stress comes from the fact that they have questioned whether all of us here in Washington have been working determinedly on behalf of joyous living with abundance on behalf of the general welfare. There has been a sense of frustration and strain from time to time. If psychiatry can help clear that up, so much the better.

I trust you will let us, General, go through this intermediate period of striving for sixty million jobs, provided we give you a promise that later on we will

try to solve the more ultimate problems of joy and beauty.

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[As a concluding comment] I would like to put in a plea for the place of people who are not fully mature. It seems to me that it is generally agreed that our friends the Russians are not fully mature; I am speaking now in the population sense. Russia has a very large proportion of young people to old people, whereas Western Europe has a very high proportion of old people to young people. We here in the U. S. are more like Western Europe than we are like Russia with regard to having a high proportion of old people.

A young population is a dynamic population, of necessity. Growth is not necessarily a sin. Growth characterizes young people. Mature people tend to be static. The psychiatric ideal might be taken to be a people who are completely mature, therefore not growing.

THE PSYCHIATRY OF ENDURING PEACE AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

THE WILLIAM ALANSON WHITE MEMORIAL LECTURES BY

G. B. CHISHOLM

C.B.E., M.D.

WITH A FOREWORD BY
ABE FORTAS

AND DISCUSSION BY
**HENRY A. WALLACE
WATSON B. MILLER
SAMUEL W. HAMILTON
ROSS McC. CHAPMAN
HARRY STACK SULLIVAN**

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WILLIAM ALANSON WHITE AND THE SPONSORS OF THESE LECTURES

IT WAS to carry on the work of their beloved teacher and friend that, with his consent, the William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation came into being in 1933 and was incorporated in the District of Columbia. Its program crystallized under his direction. Dr. White became a Trustee and its Honorary President for life on the 19th of February, 1934.

No one did more than William Alanson White to withdraw psychiatry from its cell and influence its integration with general medicine. He was a great interpreter and his lucidity of thought and expression, his capacity for the wisely spoken, as well as written, word carried far. Medicine owes him much as a distinguished teacher and editor. He was, moreover, a great hospital administrator.

The Board of Trustees of the Foundation undertook to support research and to establish facilities for training research and treatment personnel as far as possible to a new level of competence.

The Washington School of Psychiatry (1936) was a project of mature deliberation as to the existing facilities for postgraduate training. Dr. White was to have participated in its program as Clinical Professor of Psychiatry. The School has stood for a growing integration of the biological and social sciences.

The second project of the Foundation, its journal, *PSYCHIATRY*, with the same aims in view, has lived up to its purposes and has gained a warm reception.

The William Alanson White Memorial Lectures, as an occasional activity of the Foundation, are to have, I believe, a not inconsiderable place in the history of psychiatry.

Dr. Harry Stack Sullivan, first President of the Foundation, the Editor of our journal and President of the Washington School of Psychiatry, was the first Memorial Lecturer.

General Chisholm was until recently Director-General of Medical Services, Canadian Army and is Deputy Minister of Health in the Dominion Department of National Health and Welfare, as well as President of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, Canada. I need scarcely add that he is a psychiatrist of world-wide distinction.

Ross McClure Chapman,
President

The William Alanson White
Psychiatric Foundation.

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